(b) if so, what actions have been taken to enhance the income of Indian?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Both, number of passengers and passenger revenue has been increasing during the last five years.

(b) Indian Airlines has taken a number of steps like introduction of multiple fare schemes, revision of fares, optimum utilisation of aircraft etc. to further enhance its income.

Airline services to foreign country from Madurai airport

293. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to operate service to foreign countries from Madurai Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In the existing Air Services Agreement between India and other countries, Madurai does not figure as a point of call for the designated airlines of foreign countries.

Indian carriers are free to operate international services from any point in India subject to compliance of guidelines and commercial viability. However, so far, no airline operation has proposed to operate international services from Madurai.

Merchant airports

†294. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are going to follow, build and operate policy for construction of new airports in the country now;

(b) whether it is also being considered to allow the private companies to build and operate such airports without any interference of Government under the policy named as merchant airports; and

(c) the details of the decision taken in this regard by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) The extant policy on Airport Infrastructure facilitates construction of new Greenfield airports in public or private sectors or to

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.